

In the claims:

1. (New) An apparatus for distributing solid particles into a tube, comprising:
a center member; and
a plurality of damper members connected to the center member and arranged on the center member to provide substantially circumferential coverage along a longitudinal length of the tube, wherein individual ones of the plurality of damper members are axially spaced from one another along the center member and each one extends in a radial direction away from the center member toward an inside diameter of the tube on substantially only one 180° radius of the center member such that the damper member itself lacks substantial coverage of a cross section of the tube.
2. (New) A method for distributing solid particles into a tube, comprising:
positioning a loading tool in an interior of the tube, the loading tool having a center member and a plurality of damper members connected to the center member and, arranged on the center member to provide substantially circumferential coverage along a longitudinal length of the tube, wherein individual ones of the plurality of damper members are axially spaced from one another along the center member and each one extends in a radial direction away from the center member toward an inside diameter of the tube on substantially only one 180° radius of the center member such that the damper member itself lacks substantial coverage of a cross section of the tube;
filling the tube with the solid particles, wherein the solid particles contact the plurality of damper members; and
removing the loading tool from the tube as the solid particles fill the tube.
3. (New) A method for distributing solid particles into a tube, comprising:
positioning a loading tool in an interior of the tube, the loading tool having a center member and a plurality of damper members connected to the center member and arranged on the center member to provide substantially circumferential coverage along a longitudinal length of the tube, wherein individual ones of the plurality of

damper members are axially spaced from one another along the center member and each one extends in a radial direction away from the center member toward an inside diameter of the tube on substantially only one 180° radius of the center member such that the damper member itself lacks substantial coverage of a cross section of the tube;

filling the tube with the solid particles, wherein the solid particles contact the plurality of damper members;

removing the loading tool from the tube as the solid particles fill the tube; and

utilizing a sensor to communicate the position of a second portion of the center member to a first portion of the center member.

4. (New) The method for distributing solid particles into a tube of claim 3, wherein the second portion of the center member is located at a lowest extremity of the center member.

5. (New) The method for distributing solid particles into a tube of claim 3, wherein the first portion of the center member is located at an upper portion of the center member.

6. (New) The method for distributing solid particles into a tube of claim 3, further comprising breaking the center member into sections as the loading tool is removed from the tube.

7. (New) The method for distributing solid particles into a tube of claim 3, further comprising breaking the center member into sections at an eyelet and mating shackle within the center member as the loading tool is removed from the tube.

8. (New) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the center member comprises a wire.

9. (New) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the center member comprises a chain.

10. (New) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the center member comprises a rod.

11. (New) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the plurality of damper members are made of plastic.
12. (New) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of damper members includes a locking portion that attaches a longitudinal member around the center member.
13. (New) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the longitudinal member passes back through a section of the locking portion to form a loop.
14. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein the center member comprises a wire.
15. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein the center member comprises a chain.
16. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein the center member comprises a rod.
17. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein the plurality of damper members are made of plastic
18. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein each of the plurality of damper members includes a locking portion that attaches a longitudinal member around the center member.
19. (New) The method of claim 18, wherein the longitudinal member passes back through a section of the locking portion to form a loop.
20. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein removing the loading tool includes pulling the loading tool upwards between catalyst filing sequences without removing the loading tool during the catalyst filing sequences.